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Revised Briefing Notes

requested by Senator Stennis
Military Construction Subcommittee
Senate Armed Services Committee

The four attached graphics are available in 40" x 60" size for your use at the briefing. They are up to date reproductions of the graphics which appeared in NIE 11-8.

(1) LRAF Deployment
(2) Bomber Production Rates and Cumulative totals
(3) 1959 Badger Capabilities
(4) Heavy Bomber Capabilities

USAF Declass/Release Instructions On File

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A. Soviet Long Range Aviation

1. Long Range Aviation, equipped with medium and heavy bombers, is the principal component of Soviet Military Strength presently capable of long-range nuclear attack.

2. LRAF strength is currently estimated at about 47 regiments and over 1200 aircraft including:

--125 heavy bombers and tankers (Bisons and Bears)

--1100 jet medium bombers (Badgers)

--Several hundred other Badgers are in Naval and Tactical Aviation.

Chart 1

--About 1000 LRAF bombers are deployed in the Western USSR, most of them Badgers which could attack European targets directly from their home bases. More than 200 are in the southern portion of the Soviet Far East.

B. Current Status of Bomber Production

1. The Soviets have discontinued production of two of the three current models of Long Range Bombers.

--Badger production (B-47 type) ended in early 1959 (approximately 1800 produced)

--Bear production (Turboprop heavy bomber) stopped in late 1956 (approximately 60 produced)

--TU-114 transport version of Bear continues in series production

2. Bison (B-52 type) jet heavy bomber production rates now appear more stable than in earlier years.

--program was marked by several modifications to the aircraft and by fluctuating production rates.

--in recent months, however, production rate appears more regular, although monthly output still not large.

--current rate is approximately 2 per month and there is nothing to indicate any tapering off.

--approximately 130 Bisons have been produced to date.

Chart 2

--Air Force Intelligence believes nearly 3 Bisons per month produced in recent months, and that total to date is approximately 145.

C. New Bomber Aircraft

1. There are indications of continued Soviet interest in more advanced bombers.

2. One such aircraft is a medium bomber, believed capable of supersonic dash and with a range approximately that of the Badger.

--We have estimated that, if the Soviets pursue such a program, the aircraft could become available for operational use in 1962-1964.

--However, new evidence leads us to believe that it could be introduced in 1961. (Air Force believes this is likely.)

3. A subsonic nuclear aircraft could probably be developed for first operational use by about 1966. (Air Force believes 1964.)

--Would have long range and duration of flight

--Could be used for weapons delivery, reconnaissance, or as an airborne early warning system

D. Overall Capabilities of Long Range Aviation

1. In addition to introducing Badger, Bison, and Bear during last six years, LRAF capabilities have been increased by:

--more realistic and larger training exercises including Arctic activity,

--development of inflight refueling,

--improvement of potential staging bases in the Arctic,

--improvement of electronic equipment for electronic countermeasures, bombing and navigation,

--construction of nuclear weapons storage sites at many bomber bases.

2. Within the limitations of its subsonic bomber aircraft, Soviet Long Range Aviation is now a proficient force although its training, basing and maintenance standards fall below those of the U.S. Strategic Air Command. This force still consists primarily of medium bombers, best suited for operations against targets in Eurasia and capable of reaching continental U.S. targets only through extensive use of one-way missions. They have not developed a specific tanker aircraft for inflight refueling but have converted Bison and Badger bombers for use as tankers. The use of bombers as tankers would, of course, reduce the number available for use as bombers in any single attack.

Charts 3 and 4

BOMBER CHARACTERISTICS AND PERFORMANCE*

Aircraft	Bomb Lead	Combat Radius	Target Speed and Altitude
Bison	10,000 lbs.	3,000 n.m. 4,000 n.m.**	460 kts/43,400'
Bear	10,000 lbs.	4,850 n.m.	425 kts/43,200'
Badger	10,000 lbs.	1,800 n.m. 2,400 n.m.**	475 kts/42,300'

* Calculated with US MIL-C-5011A Spec data from Annex D, NIE 11-8-58.
** Once refuelled.

3. Soviet planners probably decided to forego rapid buildup of present heavy bomber models because of confidence in the development of an ICBM capability and/or dissatisfaction with Bisons and Bears.

4. Believe that the Soviets will retain a large force of bombers over the next several years although its size will probably decline gradually as they build a substantial long range missile force.

E. Present Soviet Bomber Threat

1. Although there are many variables to be considered, we believe the Soviets would employ the whole of the available heavy bomber force plus a substantial portion of the medium bomber force in operations against North America.

2. Soviet leaders would also plan attacks on allied nuclear delivery forces, including carrier task forces, and their associated bases located outside North America.

3. For planning purposes it is estimated that the Soviet Union in mid-1960 might put a combination of about 400 to 500 heavy and medium bombers over continental North America. This takes into account non-combat attrition, use of some aircraft as tankers, and use of some against overseas targets.

F. Air-to-Surface Missiles For Use By Bombers

1. A few Badger units are probably now trained and equipped to employ air-to-surface missiles.

--Current operational missile is subsonic with a range of about 55 n.m. suitable primarily for use against ships. Could also be used against coastal targets. Some of these are probably equipped with nuclear warheads.

--This missile, however, imposes severe limitations on the launching aircraft, and we believe that a new, transonic missile designed for similar purposes and with a range of about 100 n.m. will be available for operational use in about 1961.

--Believe that still another air-to-surface missile is now under active development, primarily for use against land targets, and will probably become operationally available in 1961. Range probably will be 350 n.m. at Mach 1.5-2, capable of carrying nuclear warheads.

G. Ground Launched Cruise Missile Systems

1. There are indications that the USSR has a current interest in ground launched cruise missile systems. We estimate that the

Soviets could have available for operational use beginning in the 1961-1963 period a ground launched, long range, ramjet cruise vehicle, speed about Mach 3, altitude 65,000 to 70,000 feet with a range in excess of 4000 n.m.

2. Such a system could be employed for weapons delivery and/or reconnaissance, and would further complicate Western Air Defense problems.

3. It is possible, although unlikely, that such a system could be employed as a research vehicle.